<u>Amendments to the Claims:</u>

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

<u>Listing of Claims:</u>

1.   (Currently Amended) A method in a data processing system for handling instant messages, the method comprising:

responsive to receiving an instant message, determining whether [[an]] a picture image of a sender of the instant message is associated with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is located in at least one of a local cache on the data processing system and a preexisting database of pictures on a remote data processing system as determined by a user selected preference, and wherein the determining step is automatically performed by an instant messaging process of a receiver of the instant message that determines whether the picture image of the sender is in the local cache or the preexisting database of pictures; and

displaying the picture image of the sender with the instant message on a display in the data processing system if the picture image of the sender is associated with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is stored in the preexisting database on the remote data processing system, and the preexisting database is used to provide pictures of users for a different user identification purpose other than instant messaging.

2.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the picture image of the sender and the instant message are displayed in a single window, and wherein the picture image of the sender is a mug shot of the sender.

3.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the user selected preference is local, and wherein the picture image of the sender is not received with the instant message but instead was previously received with another message previously sent to the data processing system from the sender and stored in the local cache on the data processing system.

4.   (Cancelled)

5.   (Currently Amended) A method in a data processing system for handling instant messages, the method comprising:

responsive to receiving an instant message, determining whether [[an]] a picture image of a sender of the instant message is associated with the instant message; and

displaying the picture image of the sender with the instant message on a display in the data processing system if the picture image of the sender is associated with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is embedded by an instant messaging process of the sender into the instant message prior to sending the instant message to the data processing system, and wherein the picture image of the sender is a selected picture that is selected from a plurality of different picture images of the sender, the selected picture being automatically selected by the instant messaging process based upon particular content in the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is a mug shot of the sender.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the particular content is an emoticon.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 further comprising:
receiving the picture image of the sender with the instant message.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A data processing system for handling instant messages, the data processing system comprising:
a bus system;
a communications unit connected to the bus system;
a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and
a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to determine whether [[an]] a picture image of a sender of the instant message is associated with the instant message in response to receiving an instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is located in a preexisting database of pictures, and display the picture image of the sender with the instant message on a display in the data processing system if the picture image of the sender is associated with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is attached to the instant message by a separate server data processing system, while the instant message is in transit from the sender to the data processing system, as determined by an indicator in the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is stored in the preexisting database on the remote data processing system, and the preexisting database is used to provide pictures of users for a different user identification purpose other than instant messaging, and wherein the picture image of the sender is a mug shot of the sender.

10.   (Currently Amended) A data processing system for handling instant messages, the data processing system comprising:

     determining means, responsive to receiving an instant message, for determining whether [[an]] a picture image of a sender of the instant message is associated with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is located in at least one of a local cache on the data processing system and a preexisting database of pictures on a remote data processing system as determined by a user selected preference, and wherein the determining means is an instant messaging process of a receiver of the instant message that automatically determines whether the picture image of the sender is in the local cache or the pre-existing database of pictures; and

     displaying means for displaying the picture image of the sender with the instant message on a display in the data processing system if the picture image of the sender is associated with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is stored in the preexisting database on the remote data processing system, and the preexisting database is used to provide pictures of users for a different user identification purpose other than instant messaging.

11.   (Previously Presented) The data processing system of claim 10, wherein the picture image of the sender and the instant message are displayed in a single window, and wherein the picture image of the sender is a mug shot of the sender.

12-15.   (Cancelled)

16.   (Currently Amended) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for handling instant messages in a data processing system, the computer program product comprising:

     first instructions, responsive to receiving an instant message, for determining whether [[an]] a picture image of a sender of the instant message is associated with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is located in at least one of a local cache on the data processing system and a preexisting database of pictures on a remote data processing system as determined by a user selected preference, and wherein the determining is automatically performed by an instant messaging process of a receiver of the instant message that determines whether the picture image of the sender is in the local cache or the preexisting database of pictures; and

     second instructions for displaying the picture image of the sender with the instant message on a display in the data processing system if the picture image of the sender is associated with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is stored in the preexisting database on the remote data processing system, and wherein the preexisting database is maintained separately from a generic icon

database and the preexisting database is used to provide pictures of users for a different user identification purpose other than instant messaging.

17.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the picture image of the sender and the instant message are displayed in a single window, and wherein the picture image of the sender is a mug shot of the sender.

18-21. (Cancelled)

22.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the picture image of the sender in the preexisting database also is used for a different user identification purpose other than instant messaging.

23.   (Currently Amended) A data processing system for sending an instant message by an instant messaging process executing on the data processing system, the data processing system comprising:
        receiving means for receiving the instant message from a sender co-acting with the data processing system;
        selection means for selecting [[an]] a picture image of the sender that is to be sent with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is located in a preexisting database of different pictures of the sender and is automatically selected without user intervention by the selection means based upon particular content in the instant message; and
        sending means for sending the picture image of the sender with the instant message, wherein the picture image of the sender is a mug shot of the sender.

24.   (Previously Presented) The data processing system of Claim 23, wherein the particular content is an emoticon.